

U.P. RC&D Council Meeting Minutes June 5, 2020

Board Members and Staff Participating in Meeting: All participated via Zoom video & phone

Board Members Participating by Teleconference: Howard Haulotte-Delta County Citizen, Bill Rice-Dickinson CD, Erin Carter-MSUE, Jen Ricker-Feak-Iron Baraga CD, Jim German-Chippewa County, Nick Cassel and Darcy Rutkowski-UP RC&D Council staff

Others Participating in Person or by Teleconference: Bernie Lang-Menominee County, Theresa Nelson-Delta County, Gretchen Janssen-Houghton County, Amber Butterfield-Dickinson CD, Ashley Sharp-Schoolcraft CD,

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 1:05 pm (Eastern) by Chairperson Rice.

Approval of Agenda: A motion was made by Haulotte, supported by German to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by German, supported by Ricker-Feak to approve the minutes of the previous meeting of March 6, 2020 with no changes. Motion passed.

Financial Reports: The Executive Director (ED) presented the Balance Sheet as of May 26, 2020 and the Profit and Loss statements for the period January 1, 2014 through May 26, 2020 and for the January through May 26, 2020 period. The combined balance in all accounts as of May 26, 2020 was \$58,491.47. ED wanted to highlight several UP Council deposits and expenses including: a \$2,800.00 deposit for dues from (8) Counties; \$722.78 expense for the ED's new computer and supplies; \$585.00 for Gloria LaPointe to complete the UP Council 990 taxes; \$393.51 for the UP Council website, good through December 2020. Cassel reviewed the multi-year P&L which provides a more accurate picture of income and expenditures for many of the grant-funded projects which are multi-year in nature. He pointed out most UP Council unrestricted funds comes from grant indirects. A motion was made by German, supported by Ricker-Feak to place the financial reports on file. Motion passed.

Business:

- **County Dues Update:** Cassel updated the board during the financial report that UPRCD had received a total of \$2,800.00 in annual county dues, which came from (8) counties: Delta, Menominee, Alger, Baraga, Houghton, Mackinac, Marquette, and Chippewa. Cassel wondered if the COVID-19 situation delayed counties or if they just forgot. German mentioned \$350.00 for most counties should be easily doable, and to send a reminder email to those who have not contributed. Rice agreed with German to send out the reminder email.
- **Rutkowski/Cassel transition update:** Cassel provide an update to the board and partners regarding how the Executive Director transition has been going. Cassel and Rutkowski have gone over many current grant items, administrative duties (including taxes, Quickbooks, etc.), Conservation District involvement, and more. Due to the COVID-19 situation, they have not been able to meet face to face, and have done everything via email, phone, and have shared materials via Google Drive. Rutkowski plans to give Cassel all applicable folders and materials when they can arrange an in-person meeting. Cassel commends Rutkowski for being a great teacher and going over items so well.
- **Sault Ste. Marie office update:** Cassel provided an update on the new office situation in Sault Ste. Marie. He toured 7 offices and selected one in the Arlington Plaza that would best meet UPRCD needs. The office has two rooms, which will be nice for storage or additional employees, if needed. Rent is \$250.00 per month and includes all utilities and internet. A city parking pass may be needed, but Cassel will not be sure until working there for several weeks. Cassel and Rutkowski outlined a plan for the move. Rutkowski will acquire a U-haul trailer in Marquette and hire a company to move all applicable items into the trailer. Cassel will drive to Marquette with his truck to pick up the trailer and hire a company in Sault Ste. Marie to move the trailer contents into the new office. Rutkowski and Cassel will coordinate a time, prior to the expiration of the Marquette office lease (June 30). A motion was made by German, supported by Carter to move forward with the Arlington Plaza office and for the hiring of a moving company on each end in addition to the U-haul trailer. Motion passed.
- **New GLRI Hemlock Woolly Adelgid proposal:** Cassel updated the board and partners on a new potential funding opportunity through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). 3 UP CISMA's are already

participating in a State funded survey project, along the Lake Michigan shoreline. Cassel proposed to work with all 5 UP CISMA's and associated Conservation Districts to expand the survey efforts across the region. The proposal is due June 26 and would be for \$150,000-200,000. Rice inquired if it would be impacted like the current state funding is. Cassel replied it would not because it's federal funding. Ricker-Feak mentioned utilizing the FAP Foresters that numerous CD's have would help easily leverage match towards the grant, as they are already involved in keeping an eye out for invasive forest pests. A motion was made by Haulotte, supported by German to have Cassel complete the proposal and submit it by the deadline. Motion passed.

- **SOGL Phragmites update:** Cassel wanted to highlight this particular project, as it's the only one he and other CD's have been working on due to COVID-19 freezing the state funded grants, and the USFS Phragmites project focus only on USFS lands. Rutkowski got Cassel up to speed on grant items, deliverables, using EasyGrants, and important time sensitive items such as landowner letters, sub-award agreements with CD's, and master project locations. A steering team meeting was had to discuss project timelines, modification of the budget/match, and deliverables. The state funding freeze has resulted in a request for a reduced match, which the SOGL staff have allowed. Cassel has taken the location data provided by all partners and compiled it into a master database, which then he turned into maps. He must submit multiple environmental compliance documents to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation prior to submitting a reimbursement request.

UPDATE ON CURRENT PROJECTS AND PROJECT FUNDS

NAWCA Michigan Upper Peninsula Coastal Wetland Project III

Received \$1 Million

Match Commitment \$2.2 Million

Project Dates: June 26, 2014 to December 26, 2019 (Requested Extension to March 26, 2020)

Multiple Partners

Remaining funds \$0.00

USFS Hiawatha NF Agreement for Phragmites Management

Agreement Amount \$59,700

Match Commitment \$15,000

Project Dates: April 4, 2017 to December 31, 2020 (Requested extension to September 30, 2021)

Partners – Hiawatha NF and UP Phragmites Coalition Partners

Remaining funds \$37,649.90

MISGP – Life After Phragmites: Wetland Restoration and Landowner Stewardship

Agreement Amount \$191,600

Match Commitment \$21,800

Project Dates: March 2019 to March 31, 2021 (currently paused due to SOM COVID-19 response)

Partners – Marquette, Alger, Dickinson, and Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation Districts and their associated CISMAs

Remaining funds \$113,697.39

NFWF SOGL – Life After Phragmites: Wetland Restoration & Landowner Stewardship in Michigan's UP and Northeastern Wisconsin

Agreement Amount \$150,000

Match Commitment \$150,000 (MISGP grant – will be modified)

Project Dates: August 2019 to December 31, 2021

Partners - Marquette, Alger, Dickinson, & Chippewa Luce Mackinac CDs, GLIFWC, WIDNR, Marinette Co.

Remaining funds \$143,394.91

Public Comment/Partner Updates: Jim German recommended to save every penny for next year, as he suspects it will be tough financially for a lot of organizations, including the State. Erin Carter updated the board and partners that MSUE now has all their resources available online, including things like the Master Gardener program, info about diabetes, and more. Resources are out there for people to utilize. Jim and Theresa Nelson recommend at one of the following meetings to make sure something is done to commemorate and congratulate Darcy for her years of great work with UPRCD and wish her happy retirement.

Future Meeting Dates: September 11 (teleconference), and December 4 (UPRCD office/teleconference)

Adjournment: Motion was made by German, supported by Haulotte to adjourn the meeting at 11:16 am. Motion passed.